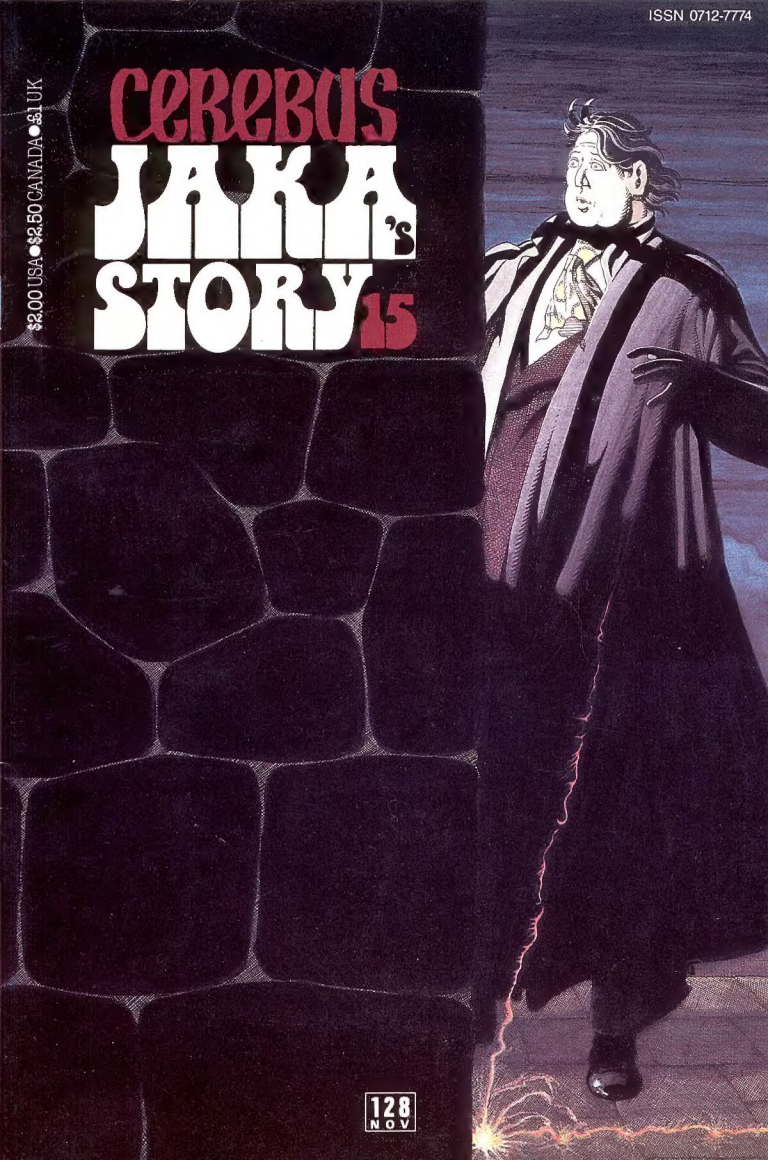
ISSN 0712-7774

CEREBUS

JAKA'S STORY 15

$2.00 USA • $2.50 CANADA • £1 UK



128
NOV

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

I'd like to say to anyone offended by my criticism of the Apollo rapes of the Moon at the end of Church & State that I am by no means opposed to space exploration and I certainly see it as a next step in human evolution, but I think we have to gain a greater appreciation of the distances we are talking about. This is *not* like sailing across the Atlantic to find a new place to buy spices. The cost of taking a colony of human beings out to the moons of Jupiter, building a little city for them so they can mine methane or some shit is beyond human reckoning. The *tax* would be in the quintillions of dollars. That is mighty expensive methane and hard to sell to foreign countries at a profit.

I think we have to realize that space exploration is a sperm urge and constitutes the most unbelievable risk to the organism involved that the human psyche could contemplate. Why? Because the only way you could explore space is to freeze-dry somebody and go spoo! straight out and away. A towering shot to centre field; like the Voyager spacecraft but without all the bus stops on the way out. And have an on-board computer that kicks in when it's within a million miles of something with lots of oxygen wrapped around it and wakes the guy (or girl) up. Our seventeen millionth generation of descendants will be worm food by that time so you don't even have to send a notebook with them or anything. The story will never make Time magazine, you know? Would that be weird to *be* the guy? I mean one minute you're shaking hands with the President and the next minute it's five trillion years later and some green slimy thing is giving you the once-over or you're being worshipped by a race of iguanas wearing party hats under a lemon yellow sky.

Hey! How about Walt Disney? Would that be wild? Dig him out from under Snow White's castle and shoot him out of the solar system with a carton of unfiltered Lucky Strikes or something. Could you just see his face when he woke up?

Of course the other thing would be Operation Yo-Yo, where the spacecraft would just go straight out for a few hundred thousand years and then just turn around and come back. Now *that* would be scary. Wake up a million years in the future when the whole world looks like Exxon got to it.

But little colonies of William Shatners and Leonard Nimoys living under glass bubbles on Neptune in houses that look like vacuum cleaner attachments?

Give me a break.

CEREBUS

NO. 128 NOVEMBER 1989

DAVE SIM
President

GERHARD
Vice-President

MONIQUE KAPTEIN
Administrative Assistant

JAKA'S STORY
a novel

•

PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 114)

•

POGROM'S PROGRESS
(Cerebus 115 to Cerebus 119)

•

THE POET
(Cerebus 120 to Cerebus 130)

•

MYSTERY ACHIEVEMENT
(Cerebus 131 to Cerebus 136)

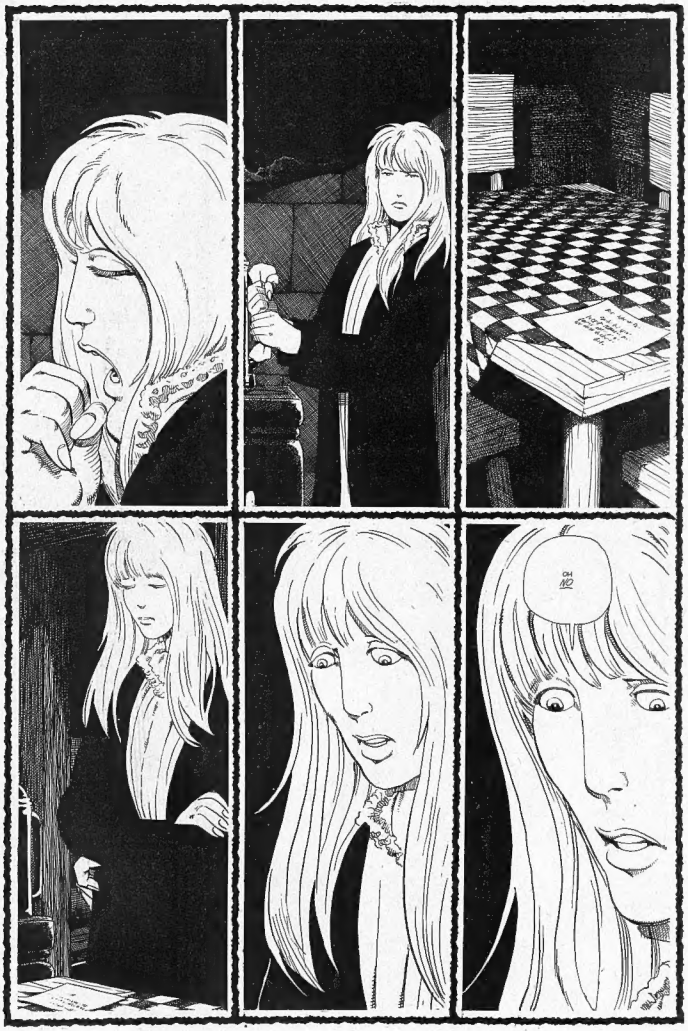
•

CEREBUS IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY AARDVARK-VANAHEIM INC. P.O. BOX 1674 STN. C KITCHENER ONTARIO CANADA N2G 4R2

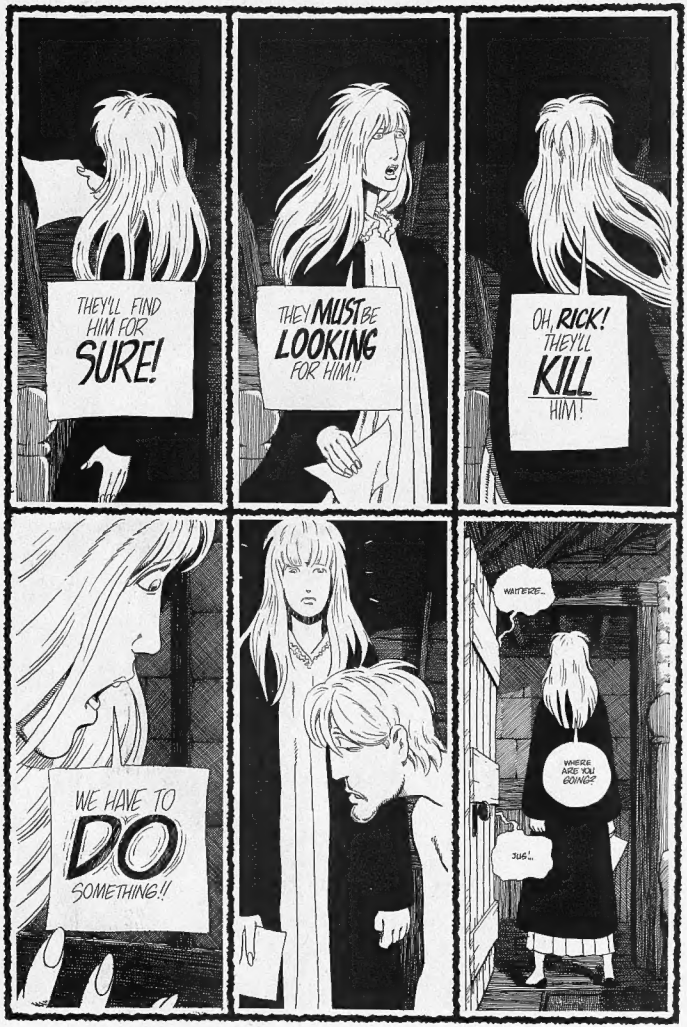
ALL CONTENTS © 1989 DAVE SIM.

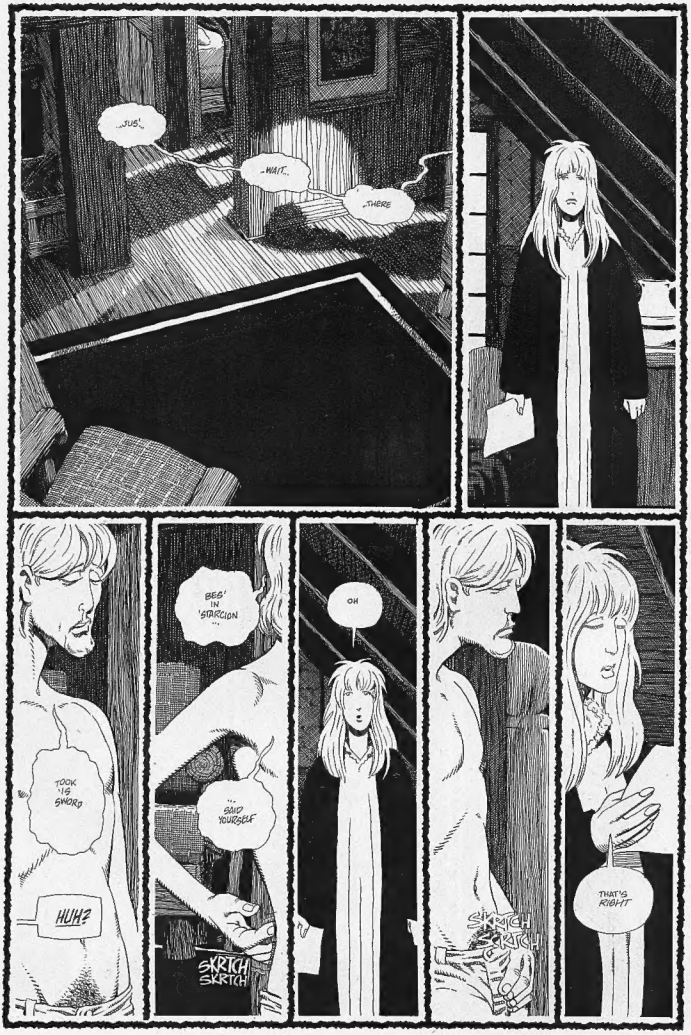
PRINTED IN CANADA BY **PRENEY PRINT & LITHO INC.**, WINDSOR, ONTARIO.

PRINTED IN CANADA


OH NO

RICK!
I'M UP!
I'M UP!
RICK!
I'M DRESSED!
I'M DRESSED!
RICK!
I'M COMING!
I'M COMING!
RICK! FRED IS GONE!
MMM?
HE LEFT US THIS NOTE!
HE HEARD US ARGUING!
HE'S GONE TO GET THE WHITE PAINT!!


THEY'LL FIND HIM FOR SURE!
THEY MUST BE LOOKING FOR HIM!!
OH, RICK! THEY'LL KILL HIM!
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!!
WAIT HERE...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
JUST...

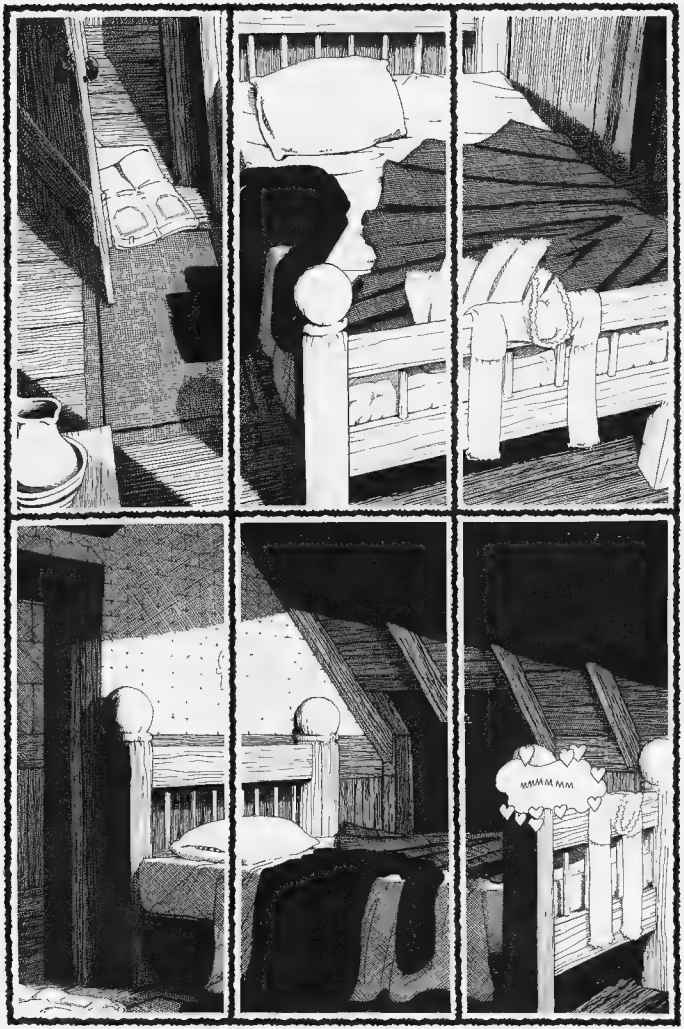

...JUS'...
...WAIT...
...THERE
TOOK 'IS SWORD
HUH?
BEG' IN 'STARCION ...
... SAVE YOURSELF
SKRTCH SKRTCH
OH
SKRTCH SKRTCH
THAT'S RIGHT

DO YOU REALLY THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?
SHER
SHER
SHER
I JUST GOT SO SCARED WHEN I...
SNOOORE
RICK.
MM.
GO BACK TO BED.
MM.

HER DANCING, SO perfectly and charmingly representative of that discipline which has been called the poorest cousin of Art, came quickly and quite naturally to Jaka. Long of limb and excruciatingly slender, the dance was, to her, an outward manifestation of all that her life had been under the relentless scrutiny and prohibitions of her Nurse. Just as Shen artisans will add a tiny flaw to a finished work (perfection, to them, being the exclusive province of their deities) so, too, was Jaka's dancing an imperfection; a stroke of the common-place which seemed to enhance and illuminate her natural aristocratic bearing.

Each day she practiced for several hours in that musty *sanctum sanctorum*, arms sweeping in lazy gestures about her head; her feet moving less frequently, in fitful starts and gradual stops, a counterpoint to her long, flowing blonde tresses which whirled in slow concentric movements about

WELL..
THAT'S THE DISHES DONE
WHAT A STRANGE LETTER...
HE WROTE IT TO BOTH OF US...
BUT, THEN, LATER HE CALLS ME BY NAME ...
AS IF HE WROTE THE LETTER JUST TO YOU ...
LET'S GET CHANGED AND CLEAN OUT THE CLOSETS ...
SURE.


MMMMMM

WE'VE BEEN DOWN HERE FOR HOURS
MMMMMMMM
I HAVE TO GET READY FOR WORK
MMMMMMMM
RICK, PLEASE
MMM!
MM
MM
NO WET WILLY!
I'M UP!
I'M UP!

HERE.
I THINK I'LL GO NEXT DOOR AND SEE OSCAR
I MEAN THE DISHES ARE DONE AND MOST OF ONE CLOSET IS...
I'LL WAKE YOU UP WHEN I GET HOME

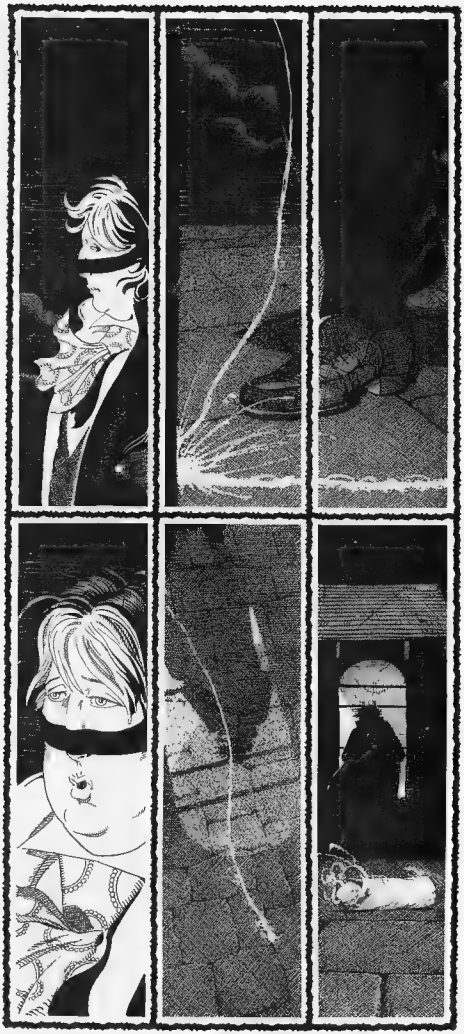
OSCAR! YOU HOME?
IN THE STUDY DEAR BOY
HI--AM I INTERRUPTING?
UNFORTUNATELY
NO!
I AM ON THE VERGE OF COMPLETING JAKA'S STORY'
THE DESCRIPTION OF HER DANCING BEING ALL THAT REMAINS UNFINISHED.
HOWEVER...
I FIND MYSELF UNABLE TO VISUALIZE
AND, CONSEQUENTLY, TO...
EXPRESS THE TRUE NATURE OF HER
CRAFT?

I'M NOT SURPRISED
I BEG YOUR PARDON
IT'S JUST SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO SEE..
YOU KNOW HOW BAD I AM AT DESCRIBING THINGS...
SHE'S DANCING RIGHT NOW
YOU SHOULD GO AND SEE
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT
BY THE WAY- I MET...
'FRED'
THE OTHER DAY

YOU DID?!
MM. HE'S A GOOD DEAL SHORTER THAN I PICTURED HIM
BOY! YOU AREN'T JUST KIDDING
AND HE WAS WEARING A DRESS
A DRESS!?
MMM MARVELOUSLY ECCENTRIC
YEAH. I JUST HOPE HE GETS BACK OKAY
BACK?
YOU MEAN HE INTENDS TO RETURN?
OH, SURE HE JUST WENT TO GET THE WHITE PAINT
EXTRAORDINAIRE
I WILL SEE YOU SHORTLY

HER DANCING (which, in a very short time, indeed, would be all that stood between young Jaka and starvation in the cold and merciless city-state fest) was perfectly and charmingly suited to the atrophied tastes and corrupt sensibilities of the art-less masses. A lurid display of woman-flesh; painted, then shrouded in delicate silks and heavy, translucent laces; emphasized by crude gesture and laconic expression, it was less an art than an occupation and less an occupation than a trade or livelihood; a

HER DANCING HAD the breath-taking impact, on first sight, of a truly magnificent piece of legerdemain: a curious, unique, but not un-pleasing mixture of mis-direction and flamboyance which carried the observer's eye first this way, then that in delicate shallow arcs, each, in its turn, intersecting very near to the center-point of her torso, a clever interplay of hand and wrist, arm and elbow, shoulder and



HER DANCING, SO perfectly refined, so joyously executed, so fully and completely realised, emerged there in the squalor of the Hidden Room: brought forth (summoned?) from that same Primal and Fiery Origin which illuminates all great Art irrespective of its age or audience. None would see this rarest of Expressions for the first year of Its Existence (and when, finally, It revealed Itself in public places It would be confined to those establishments reviled and despised by both the truly Good and the merely sanctimonious).

Her Dance was Art. Of that there could be no serious question for It bore within it that characteristic of Invariable Brilliance that so distinguishes True Art from its poorer relations. As an Art it did not so much *rouse* emotion as *lift* it, in a gravitational, tide-like manner common to all Celestial Bodies. It was not mysterious so much as it was, itself, Mystery; Enigmatic, Multi-Faceted; each of its masks a proper noun, the first initial always and self-evidently in the upper case

The Dancer's demeanour bespoke a profound disinterest in all issues of surroundings. It was an apathy borne of self-awareness (or, more accurately, an awareness of those forces acting through her). It was impossible to *only* observe her movements for this was no mere entertainment or diversion in which she was engaged. Despite one's best efforts to remain detached, one was, quite simply, a raw material (one felt) in some larger Enterprise of which the Dance and (hence) the Dancer, were only the most readily-apparent and easily-perceived manifestation. As is always the case in the Presence of the Profound, her Dance brought with it a lightening of one's Cares, a rising and advancing of one's Spirit.

Whatever Muse it was (Clio, Calliope, Erato?) who would flee Palnu with her in less than a year's time; whatever Patroness of all that is good and enriching and civilized (Euterpe, Melpomene, Polyhymnia?) would be at the Dancer's side those first few days and nights on lest's squalid Docks, where her first residence would be an abandoned packing crate; whatever Larger Awareness, best combining those characteristics of romantic love and narcotic addiction (Terpischore, Thalia, Urania?) that would shelter her there, warming Jaka with visions of promise and triumph; whatever secrets they would share, that Muse and that Dancer, they would *always* share irregardless of the Effect they created, the Adulation they engendered and (most certainly) the Paltry Income on which they subsisted.

RICHARD!
I'M GOING TO WRITE A SHORT NOTE TO YOUR WIFE WHICH YOU MUST GIVE TO HER THE VERY INSTANT SHE ARRIVES HOME!
BANG
OKAY
DID YOU SEE HER DANCE?
DID I?
IT WAS A STROKE OF GENIUS! A REVELATION!
SHE'S GOOD, ISN'T SHE?
GOOD?! SHE IS EXQUISITE! SHE IS PERFECTION INCARNATE!
SHE
REMEMBER NOW...
THE INSTANT SHE ARRIVES HOME...
RIGHT
AND...

...AT THE RISK OF OFFENDING YOU...
I MUST ASK YOU TO LEAVE, NOW, WHILE I COMPLETE MY STORY.
YOU MEAN IT'S DONE?
I CAN TELL HER?
NONONO. I RESERVE THAT PLEASURE FOR MYSELF
TOMORROW NIGHT
I SHALL READ IT TO HER
WOW!
CAN I LISTEN TOO?
YOU
WITHERS
THAT LITTLE OLD MAN
THE GODS THEMSELVES SHALL HEAR MY TALE...
OH, BOY!
ADIEU RICHARD. SLEEP WELL
AD YOU OSCAR.

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave,

You are not missing anything. Smartfood popcorn is not really that good. In fact, to be honest it's bad. Think about it Dave, this is a part of the food chain covered with "whitish cheesy powder". Remember, the key word is *cheesy*.

On the other hand, if you are unable to obtain Snapple Iced Tea in your neck-o-the-woods, you are being denied one of life's true treats.

Sincerely,
Brian Hurley
P.S. Nice book though, eh!

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

I just found my copy of Jaka's Story #6. You wanna know where it was? Okay I'll tell you. It was in the silver bag. You wanna know what the silver bag is? Okay, I'll tell you.

It's my trip-guru!

You wanna know what that means? Okay, I'll tell you. Its what I carry my toys around in when I'm tripping on Lisurgic Acid Diethlemide (LSD-M!)

You wanna know why #6 was in there? Cuz I was tripping when I bought it. You wanna know why I bought it? Because I wanted to. You wanna know what happened? I stared at the cover for *30 minutes*. You wanna know why? Because that cover was *NEAT*!

FNORD,
RAS Cliff S. Judge
Address forgotten at the moment

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Maybe you can explain this to me Why is there as much *Entertainment Tonight* on television as national news? Why does America stand for this? We just suck, don't we? Tell me, also, are you as scared of these Jesus freaks as I am? Of course you are – why else all the Pope business? I mean, they wouldn't be scary, only laughable, except that they're in the Senate, the White House and the Courts. Well, I do my part: I march for choice and equip myself with as much anti-biblical knowledge as possible. I'll argue anyone to death who has something to say about "God." (Hah!) Dave--besides your ever-vocal support for masturbation – howzabout some power atheism?

Until I'm Dead,
Dave Katzman
236 E. 18th Ave.
Columbus, OH
43201

P.S. Jaka is the hottest babe In comics, I mean. And the tension you've been building up with these few characters and sparse dialogue is just incredible. Here's to art.

P.P.S. Hey listen up readers – the owner of Domino's Pizza is a declared Pro-Lifer (anti-choice that is) so don't buy from them. Their pizza sucks anyways.

P.P.P.S. And Dave, can I join the N.G.A.C.P. proposed by Shedden, or what?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

I noticed that your book isn't micro-wave-ready. Why, then, should I be compelled to purchase it when there are so many products around that *are*?

Yer confused friend,
James Murphy
8 Wycombe Way
Princeton Jct., NJ
08550

P.S. Is there anywhere I could go to find a micro-waveable Cerebus?

P.P.S. My foot still hurts.

P.P.P.S. I live in fucking New *Jersey*! Not New York! Can't you fucking tell?! Next time you print an address, look twice! (Tarim!)

P.P.P.P.S. You printed my letter, but ya never answered my question about what that Zolastraya comic is.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Mr. Sim:

Boy oh boy oh boy! I really like your comic! It's already one of my favorite titles, almost as good as the X-Men! I heard somewhere that you used to have a guy who was supposed to be like Wolverine (he's my favorite character)! I hope you bring him back! Maybe he could get in a fight with the Punisher, just like in the real comic! And then maybe you could also have a guy dressed up like Michael Keaton come in, only he'd be a lot more heavier, and then when Wolverne asked him who he was, he could just say, "I'm FATman!"

Get it?

Make mine Cerebus!

The Flabulous Fan Boy
Tucson, AZ

P.S. Actually I haven't read any recent Cerebus issues yet – only the reprints. But I'm planning to soon! I hope they're just as zany and wild as the early ones!!!

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave Sim,

I haven't written to a comic before, and I'm not quite sure why I'm writing to you now. No, I'm not stoned. I'm not going to complain about the X-Men or Batman, either. I guess I just wanted to say that Cerebus is better literature than *Sons and Lovers*. What is it about people from Canada? Do you like Leonard Cohen, Dave? I do. My girlfriend is in Pennsylvania, and I wish I was, too. I'd better go, Dave, there's no point to this letter. I've failed.

Love,
Joshua M. Cozby
17521 Colina Drive
Yorba Linda, CA
92686

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Re Scott Klopfer's letter in issue 125, I believe that the term he wants to describe a female "wanking" is *"CLIT-WHACKING"*.

I trust that this will put Mr. Klopfer's mind at rest.

Yours faithfully,
Scott Barr
86 Riccarton
Westwood
East Kilbride
Glasgow, Scotland

★★★★★★★★★★

Yo Dave,

So sorry to see so many male cousins-in-Aardvark displaying misogynistic tendencies in public. I mean, I hate

rejection as much as the next guy, but unfounded generalizations based upon a few isolated incidents are more confident strides on the treadmill of patriarchy, which will, of course, lead to melting of the polar ice caps and oceanfront property in Kitchener. You better discourage these impressionable young men before your picturesque town (it *is* picturesque, isn't it? I haven't made my pilgrimage yet) turns into another Kennebunkport. I mean it. Just ask Bill Griffith.

Also, I promise not to bust on you for parts of your work that I don't think are perfect anymore. Can you forgive me? Thanks, luv.

What else – there's a Dead Kennedys song called "All Religions Suck" that I think of when I reread certain parts of Church'n'State. High praise or what?

Lastly, I started buying with #37 – does that make me a member of Club 263? I do hate to be an outsider . . .

Love,
Tony Dunlop
St. Paul, MN

P.S. Nice anecdote in this month's Note. Remind me to avoid the theatre (allegorically).

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Whomever,

Do you like the purple paper and red ink I'm writing this letter on and in? I hope you do, because that's all I have available. (For those of you who read this letter when it's printed [I hope it's printed] it probably won't look the same [if you get the picture <how do you like all the parentheses, brackets, and braces I'm using?>])

I have a couple of things to say. I am a new reader of Cerebus, starting from #114, Jaka's Story 1, Prologue; it seemed a logical place to start. I enjoy it immensely. But (are you allowed to start a sentence with the word "BUT"? [Here we go again!]) While re-reading my issues, I picked up some things that I may, or may not have picked up before.

Please excuse me for working backward, but I keep my copies in sort of a demented kind of order.

If I may interrupt myself for a brief moment, did you know I look like Jaka?

Issue #121, Jaka's Story 8, the Poet – you speak of the "Locked Door". Why the hell do you call it the Locked Door when it isn't locked any more? And when you're describing Jaka's fingers why the hell (if I may be redundant,) were you using the words you did, and then go on to say that those words couldn't describe them? Use words, metaphors, allusions, etc. that *DO* describe them in the future. In short-tell it how it is, not how it is not.

How the fuck do you get off writing some of the stuff you do? (You do get off while writing this stuff don't you?)

By the way, when Rick is visiting Oscar in his room (same issue) who's the idiot dumb fuck person who thought of putting that classic painting of the woman in the chair on the wall behind Oscar, when he's saying "You don't . . . a half hour"? It looks STUPID! get that? Now don't go doing a thing like that again.

As for issue #118, Jaka's Story 5, Pogrom's Progress, I had to buy a new copy, because the little 10 yr. old *SHIT* I was babysitting for tried to color it in. What a piss off!

Issue #117, Jaka's Story 4, Pogrom's Progress – "You the narrator" are being a hypocrite!, because you say, "A far less charitable narrator than myself might be moved to note, so on and so forth." By mentioning what you did, you *are* being a less charitable narrator than yourself. (I wonder if that is theoretically possible [the whole passage made me want to drop or get stoned or something <miss those brackets don't you?>]), but when you say that, "You the narrator", you are putting yourself down, and, as I mentioned before, in a sense being a hypocrite. Do you realize how much of a fool you were being? If you do, come out and say it, but if you don't, I think you owe it to yourself, to me, and the rest of the reader to say "FUCK! How could I have been so *DUMB*?" So come on, now that I've finished insulting all you people, what are you waiting for?

Yvanna (Yes, it's pronounced the same as Mrs. Trump) Woods

301-"E" Catharine St.
Philadelphia, PA
19147

P.S. Have a stop in Philly when you get a chance, ok?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave:

— I'm slightly confused.

A while ago I met this girl who I thought was really cute. She was one of those types who strikes you as being really quite sharp and intelligent but who realized, probably around the same time that she started developing mammary tissue and began investing in expensive hair preparations, that life and society in general didn't require her to make use of her intelligence.

— Or at least not to a degree of audacity that would be easily noticed by all those guys who spend a lot of time hanging around her and wondering whether or not she was a dance-major or is she was simply very lucky to have a body like the one she has. (As I discovered after an investigation spurred on by a number of perfectly natural and probably very complicated neuro-chemical functions taking place somewhere in the depths of my brain and groin area, it turned out to be quite a lot of both.)

Anyway, I met this girl on a bus sometime later . . . or rather, she met me. — You see, I was just sitting there, minding my own business and playing twiddle-thumbs with a little piece of paper that the bus driver had for some reason seen fit to offer me after I had dropped my coins in the fare-box. *She* came up to me.

And Dave, she knew my name and actually *used* it to call my attention away from the little piece of paper. — Not only that, but she bounced up and snuggled up next to me and started chattering away in a well practised voice who's tone sang of sunshine and flowers and all kinds of other cutesy things, offsetting it all the while by making damn sure that she was pressing a healthy portion of that mammary tissue I mentioned earlier against my arm.

Now this is where it got even weirder, and why I'm slightly confused:

Dave, I told her to fuck off.

— Well, not in so many words . . . but I acted real cold and stiff for the whole bus ride, responding to her superbly crafted small talk with only the most terse of replies. And finally, at the end of the route, she went away looking kind of angry and now every time I see her she gives me this evil look that would probably have instantly shattered the heart of any member of her all male fan club, but which now only serves to annoy me.

Dave, I ask you this:

What the Hell is wrong with me?!

Am I getting old? — Have all those wacky bio-functions finally left my body? — Am I destined to be like this forever?

Shit Dave, this is scary!

Anyway, I just thought that I might ask that you hurry up and finish your otherwise great love story and get on with something else so that I don't have it as an extra reminder of the whole wretched topic.

Yours somewhat perturbed,

M'oak.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave!,

I just realized something!!

I've been reading your life's work for almost six years now and I'm not even sure how Cerebus is pronounced! . . .

Is it Cerebus or Cerebus??

I'm feeling kinda stupid, Dave.

Help me out . . .

Steve de Boode

P.S. Women man, fucking bitches, all of them . . . they say they love you, take all your money then go and fuck someone else . . . I ain't a fag or nothing but it'll be a cold day in hell before I get involved again! . . .

★★★★★★★★★★

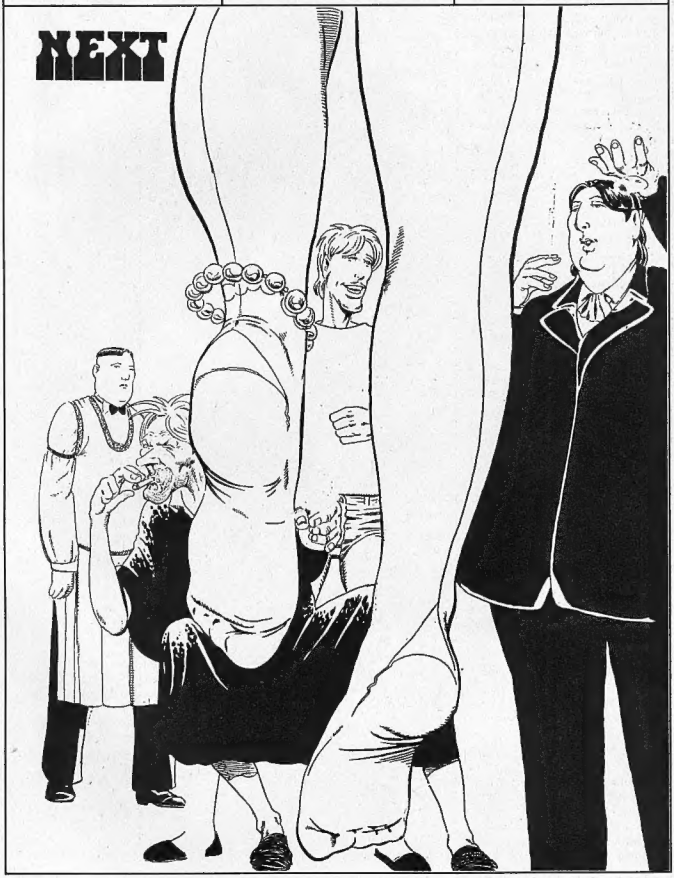
Dear Dave,

I just drank some beer ate some food listened to a Pixies LP and read all of The Swords of Cerebus (Cerebus!). It was bloody great. So I bloody well read all of my dear brother's collection of Cerebus. They were bloody Great. I just wanted to say keep up the bloody great work.

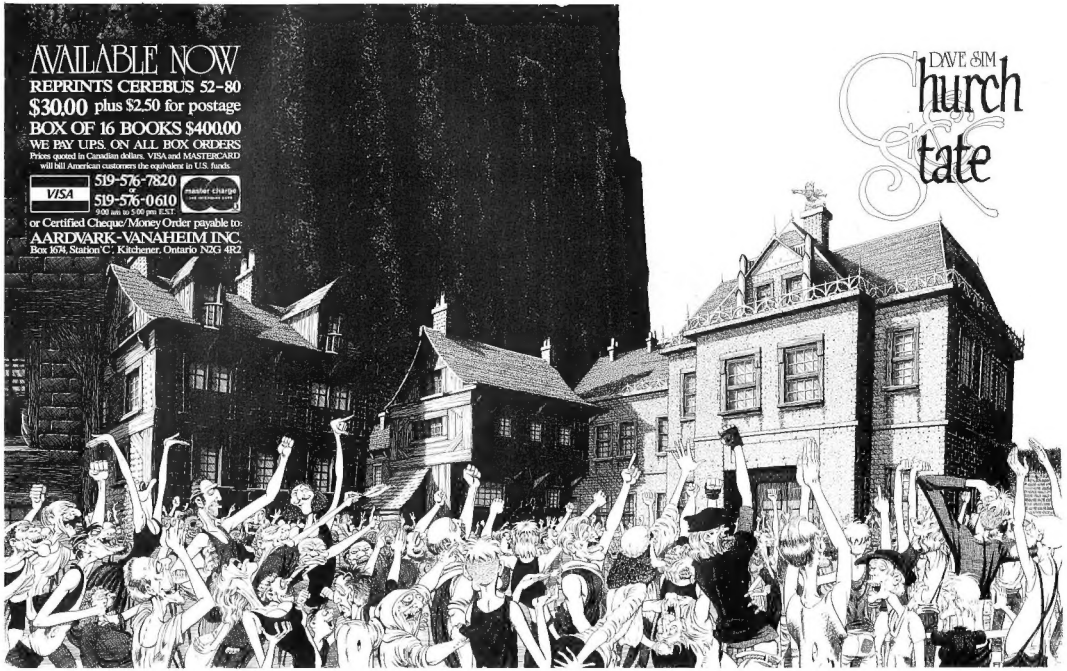
Yours faithfully,

A.J. Bober
15 All Saints Ave.
Cocchester
Essex C03 4NZ
England UK

★★★★★★★★★★



DAVE SIM
HIGH
SOCIETY
AVAILABLE NOW
REPRINTS CEREBUS 26-50
$25.00 plus $2.50 for postage
BOX OF 16 BOOKS $340.00
WE PAY U.P.S. ON ALL BOX ORDERS
Prices quoted in Canadian dollars. VISA and MASTERCARD will bill American customers the equivalent in U.S. funds.
VISA
519-576-7820
519-576-0610
9:00 am to 5:00 pm EST.
master charge
or Certified Cheque/Money Order payable to:
AARDVARK-VANAHEIM INC.
Box 1674, Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4R2


AVAILABLE NOW
REPRINTS CEREBUS 52-80
$30.00 plus $2.50 for postage
BOX OF 16 BOOKS $400.00
WE PAY U.P.S. ON ALL BOX ORDERS
Prices quoted in Canadian dollars. VISA and MASTERCARD will bill American customers the equivalent in U.S. funds
VISA
519-576-7820
or
519-576-0610
9:00 am to 5:00 pm E.S.T.
master charge
or Certified Cheque/Money Order payable to:
AARDVARK-VANAHEIM INC.
Box 1654, Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4R2
DAVE SIM
Church
State

'We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it.'

Oscar Wilde
preface
to "Picture of
Dorian Gray"